

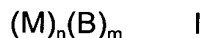
CLEAN VERSION OF AMENDMENTS

Cancel claims 7-10 and 13.

Amend claims 1-6, 11, 12, 14 and 15 as follows:

1. (amended) The method of increasing the bioavailability of mineral salts which comprises combining said salts and α -lipoic acid or an α -dihydrolipoic acid.
2. (amended) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one mineral salt is combined with a-lipoic acid or a-dihydrolipoic acid.

- B¹
3. (amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the mineral salts have the formula I,



where

M is a monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable metal cation,

B is a monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable anion,

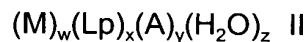
n is 1, 2 or 3 and

m is 1, 2 or 3,

where the subscripts n and m correspond to the valency and charge equalization of the mineral salt of the formula I.

- B²
4. (twice amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the combination is metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes.

- B³
5. (amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the combination is metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes of the formula II,



where

M is a monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable metal cation or a mixture of monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable metal cations,

Lp is racemic α -lipoic acid or α -dihydrolipoic acid, (R)- or (S)- α -lipoic acid or (R)- or (S)- α -dihydrolipoic acid, racemic α -lipoate or dihydro- α -lipoate or (R)- or (S)- α -lipoate or (R)- or (S)-dihydro- α -lipoate,

A is a physiologically acceptable monovalent or divalent anion,

w is 1 or 2

x is 1, 2, 3 or 4,

y is 0, 1, 2 or 3 and

z is 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6,

where the subscripts w, x and y correspond to the valency and charge equalization of the compound of the formula II.

6. (twice amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the α -lipoic acid is R- α -lipoic acid or the α -lipoate is (R)- α -lipoate.

11. (amended) A method of increasing the bioavailability of mineral salts in feedstuff or food supplements which comprises adding to said feedstuff or food supplements an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.

12. (amended) A method of improving cosmetic formulations which comprises adding to

B⁵
Cont. said formulations an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.

B⁶ 14. (amended) A method of improving drugs that are used to treat disorders in which lipoic acid has a therapeutic or prophylactic effect and in which there is a mineral salt deficiency which comprises adding to said drugs an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.

B⁷ 15. (amended) A method of improving compositions for treating diabetes, tumors, HIV infections, AIDS, renal insufficiency, malnutrition, protein-energy malnutrition and mineral deficiencies which comprises adding to said compositions an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.
